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Salt Lake City, Utah.

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PEOPLES' TICKET.

For Delegate to the Fiftieth Congress.

JOHN T. CAINE,
OF SALT LAKE.

IDAHO'S TEST OATH LAW.

The Evening News has a special telegram from Blackfoot, Idaho, announcing that the Test Oath Act of the late Legislature, has been pronounced valid and constitutional by Chief Justice Hays. The law referred to declares that before any one can vote at an election in that Territory he must take the following oath:

"You do solemnly swear (or affirm) that you are a male citizen of the United States over the age of twenty-one years; that you have actually resided in this Territory for four months last past and in this county thirty days; that you are not a bigamist or polygamist; that you are not a member of any order, organization or association which teaches, advises, counsels or encourages its members, devotees or any other person, to commit the crime of bigamy or polygamy or any other crime defined by law as a duty arising or resulting from membership in such order, organization or association, or which practices bigamy or polygamy or plural or celestial marriage, as a doctrinal rite of such organization. That you do not, either publicly or privately, or in any manner whatsoever, teach, advise, counsel or encourage any person to commit the crime of bigamy or polygamy, or any other crime defined by law, either as a religious duty or otherwise; that you regard the Constitution of the United States and the laws thereof, and of this Territory as interpreted by the courts, as the supreme law of the land, the teachings of any order, organization or association to the contrary notwithstanding, and that you have not previously voted at this election. So help you God."

We doubt if anybody expected or dared hope that Hays would rule otherwise than he has done. The office of Federal Judge in a Territory is as completely political in its nature as any office in the gift of the President. Judge Hays is a fairly intelligent lawyer, and hence knows that the act mentioned is not only not constitutional, but that the Constitution expressly prohibits or forbids the enactment of such a bill; yet Judge Hays understands that to have decided according to his knowledge of the law would have been equivalent to a tender of his resignation. Both political parties in Idaho took part in the passage of the bill; both are committed to its indorsement, and the two candidates for Delegate to Congress have pronounced in favor of sustaining the law. Under the circumstances, all Hays had to do was to find some plausible excuse for declaring the law a valid enactment, and thus put himself beyond the political reach of those who rule or may rule in the Territory.

The election will occur in two weeks, before which event there will be neither time nor opportunity to change the ruling just made. The result will be that between 1,800 and 2,000 Mormons in Idaho will be deprived of their right to vote. This fact will make no real difference to the candidates for Congress, as neither would have received any Mormon votes; but it will result in placing all local offices in the hands of anti-Mormons, though in some districts and counties it will be difficult to find enough Gentiles to fill the places.

The French Minister of Marine surely believes in the doctrine: "To preserve peace it is necessary to be prepared for war." He recently introduced a bill into the French legislature which appropriated \$28,000,000 for the construction of men-of-war ships, and \$12,000,000 more for the construction of ports of refuge. The bill proposes such concentration of work under contracts that these additions and improvements in the navy shall be completed in four years. This would indicate that France thinks she wants a strong navy and that she wants it in a hurry, and we believe she is right.

THE STORAGE OF SURPLUS WATER.

Edmund G. Ross, Governor of New Mexico, in his report to the Secretary of the Interior last year suggested a scheme for the storage of surplus water. In his report this year, made on the 18th instant, he again calls attention to the subject by saying: "The system of storage basins at the heads of several streams, especially the Rio Grande, for which numerous canyons and arroyos are excellently adapted, would save a

This, he says, would reduce to cultivation many millions of acres of productive land now barren and desolate." In concluding this branch of his report Governor Ross asks for a sufficient appropriation to at least satisfactorily test this theory.

We sincerely hope that the attention of Congress will be called to this matter, as it is one of considerable interest to the whole inter-mountain region, where the farmer has to depend upon irrigation in raising his crop. If the experiment of storing water in mountain basins were to prove successful, there would be reason to hope that some of the now desert valleys of Utah would become productive, as all that is needed to bring vast areas of land under cultivation in Utah is a supply of water for irrigation purposes. But the expense attending the experiment of storing water in a system of mountain reservoirs is so great, and the issue so uncertain, that private enterprise and capital are appalled at the undertaking; but if government would make the experiment, should it prove successful, private enterprise would doubtless carry it on. Then should it be successful, the sale of lands by government, which otherwise will never be sold, would in time return to the coffers of the Treasury all that would be expended in demonstrating that surplus waters could be successfully stored in mountain basins and canyons. By all means let the experiment be made.

THE EAGLE ROCK Register says that "reports from over the Territory seem to indicate that in Mormon counties John Hailey is advocating the repeal of the test oath law; in Shoshone County he is advocating annexation to Montana; in Nez Perce he is advocating annexation to Washington Territory. In Althuras he was opposed to annexation, and the test oath was all right." The Register seems to have followed Hailey around pretty closely, though it evidently has not got into his consultations with Judge Hays in regard to the political necessity of sustaining the test oath law.

A RIDICULOUS WHINE.

There is one item in the report of the Utah Commission to the Secretary of Interior, the full text of which was published in yesterday's Herald, that is extremely amusing. It is that portion of the report which alludes to the effort of the Territorial Legislature last winter to enact a law concerning registrations and elections in the Territory, but their efforts amounting to nothing because of the arbitrary exercise of the veto power possessed by the Governor of our unfortunate Territory. After alluding to this effort on the part of the local Legislature, in an injured tone the Commission adds: "The effect of such a bill would have been to return the registration and election machinery to the local agencies, from which they were taken by the act of Congress, and to restore to the Mormon people the political power of the Territory, in derogation of the act of Congress referred to."

This is decidedly rich. It shows that the Commissioners have an idea that the Utah Commission is to be eternal in its existence, and that the object of its creation was to take the political power out of the hands of the Mormon people. A glance at the ninth section of the Edmunds bill which created the useless Commission will certainly dispel such an illusion. That section declared all registration and election offices of every description of our Territory vacant and appointed this Commission to attend to all registration and election business in the Territory, under the existing laws of the United States and the Territory, and were to "continue in office until the Legislative Assembly of said Territory shall make provisions for filling said offices as herein authorized."

The section closes by saying: "And at or after the first meeting of the said Legislative Assembly whose members shall have been elected and returned according to the provisions of this act, said Legislative Assembly may make such laws conformable to the organic act of said Territory, and not inconsistent with other laws of the United States, as it shall deem proper concerning the filling of the offices in said Territory declared vacant by this act."

That is, the election and registration offices. Yet when in conformity with the provisions of this infamous Edmunds bill, the Legislature undertakes to pass those laws which would do away with this useless and expensive Commission, as was contemplated by the act which created it, a pitifully plaintive cry goes up from the Commission that the effect of such a law would be "to restore to the Mormon people the political power of the Territory, in derogation of the act of Congress," meaning the Edmunds bill. Wouldn't it be a good idea for the Commission to look up the Edmunds law and read it, and study the object of their creation? They will then find that the object sought by that measure was not the taking of political power from the Mormon people, but the punishment of polygamy and unlawful cohabitation; and to take political power from the hands of actual polygamists, and not others of the Mormon faith. The trouble with the Utah Commission is simply this: They have hold of a government test that is decidedly rich in its yield of filthy lucre. They get the

THE LAWS NOT TO BLAME.

Bob Ingersoll is correct in many things, whatever may be his position in regard to Deity. He says he would like to see the workmen have a majority in Congress, with a President of their own, "so that they would satisfy themselves how little, after all, can be accomplished by legislation." He says "the moment responsibility should touch their shoulders they would become conservative" because they would discover that "making a living in this world is an individual affair." It is one of the vain ideas of men that their own sorrows may be assuaged by legislation, and the various ills of life cured by laws; it is another vain idea that if laws were as they should be this would be an easy world in which to get a living. As a matter of fact legislation is of very little concern to workmen; the laborer has comparatively little to do with any laws save those which are made for the protection of individuals against each other in a physical sense. The demagogue will go upon the platform and tell the toiler that if it were not for laws enacted in the interest of the rich and the monopolists, his lot would be an easy one; that hours of labor would be shorter and wages higher; that dry goods and groceries would be cheaper, taxes lighter and life would be a perpetual holiday. Unfortunately the laboring man too often believes the demagogue and rails against laws and lawmakers, officials and governments.

As illustrating how little effect laws have upon the lot of laboring men, it may be stated that for years Congress has thrown its weight in favor of the eight-hours-a-day system; there is a Congressional law which makes eight hours a day's work in the navy yards and other government works where men are employed for wages; yet the rule throughout the country is ten hours a day. If Congress and all the State legislatures were to declare eight hours shall constitute a day's work, and that no more shall be required of a laborer, the lot of the workman would not be in the least improved; indeed, it would be made harder, for wages would immediately be reduced to correspond with the shorter hours. So also if laws were made to fix or regulate the prices of commodities they would not benefit the toiler, for the owners would not sell if the prices were too low. The commercial laws are those which apply to the workmen, and these cannot be changed or materially affected by legislative enactments. These commercial laws provide that value must be given for whatever is received; that you cannot get something for nothing. These laws regulate wages and fix the prices of commodities, basing wages upon the value of the labor performed, and prices upon the cost of production. Legislation cannot enable a man to do more in a given time, nor can it increase the product of his toil.

If it were not for the disasters which would be apt to result from their inexperience and blunders it would be well to let the impractical men who are eternally charging that all evils are due to bad legislation or to a lack of good legislation, have absolute control of the law-making and executive branches of government for a time—just long enough to open their eyes to the fact that success in life depends largely upon the individual, and that laws have very little to do in his own case or affairs.

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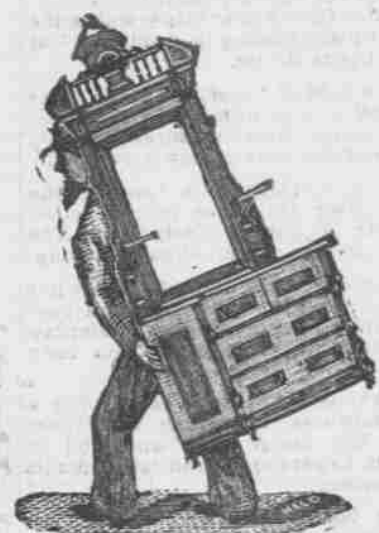
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